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Clematis flammula

[Synonyms : *Clematis pallasii*]

SWEET-SCENTED VIRGIN'S BOWER is a deciduous climber. Native to southern Europe it has small sweetly-scented, pure white flowers.

It is also known as Biting clematis, Fragrant clematis, Fragrant virgin's bower; *Plamének palčivý* (Czech), *Pordalás* (Greek), Purging periwinkle, and Virgin's bower.

Warning – most of the plant is poisonous and should not be taken internally. It can cause severe abdominal pain, gastro-intestinal irritation and death. The sap from the bruised plant can cause blistering, inflammation and sores. Because of its acrid taste animals (for which it is also fatal) rarely eat it.

Flammula is derived from an old name for the plant or from Latin *flamma* (flame, blaze, blazing fire) meaning 'little flame' with reference perhaps to a burning taste.

Authorities indicate that Sweet-scented virgin's bower was introduced to Britain from Spain in the early 17th Century.

Medicinally, this species has sometimes been used in homoeopathic treatments as an alternative to upright virgin's bower (*Clematis recta*).